

Volume 71 No. 2

CITIZEN AIRMAN

April 2019

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Official Magazine of the Air Force Reserve



CHIEF KELLY: IT WAS AN HONOR TO SERVE WITH YOU



Earlier this month at March Air Reserve Base, California, I had the opportunity to wish a fond farewell to Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly, Air Force Reserve's senior enlisted advisor and Air Force Reserve Command's command chief master sergeant.

She has been my principle advisor on matters concerning the health, morale and welfare of approximately 74,000 dedicated Reserve enlisted, officer and civilian members serving at more than 60 military installations worldwide.

Chief Kelly's top priority was taking care of our Airmen and promoting positive change to progress this great command. She traveled to the AOR multiple times and visited numerous wings where you and your families serve.

She took time to not only listen, but hear, the unique challenges you face balancing individual wellness, service, careers and family. Those challenges did not fall on deaf ears. As the voice of the enlisted force, she championed for the tools, training and support you need to improve your quality of life and be equipped to carry out the Air Force Reserve mission to fly, fight and win.

Chief Kelly also campaigned to fix the issues which impacted the Reserve balance and made recommendations to defer or realign tasks not directly contributing to the overall readiness of the force.

At the unit level, many of our commander support staffs saw their manpower increase to reduce administrative distractions that took time away from warfighters.

Surgeon general medical file backlogs affecting participation and pay were reduced through process improvements. Nearly \$90 million in Reserve Personnel Appropriation funds were reallocated across the wings to increase participation and readiness.

Reserve Citizen Airmen were empowered to take smart risks and eliminate cumbersome additional duties and unnecessary ancillary training, which you identified as interfering with mission requirements, enabling every unit training assembly to be a readiness UTA.

Her voice carried as a steward of trust, demanding positive change and unwavering support so you and your families have better access to resiliency tools and programs.

She advocated improvement for family-focused programs, such as the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program, designed to help service members and their families prepare for, see through, and reintegrate after deployments. She supported veteran initiatives like the Enlisted Village and the Armed Forces Retirement Home, offering safe and secure retirement communities for our widows, spouses and retirees.

Chief Kelly valued your diverse experience and capitalized on ways to grow and keep your talent. More than 40 recruiters and 39 career assistance advisors were added across the enterprise to recruit and retain the best and brightest Reservists, ensuring the greatest edge in any future conflict.

She steered the Senior Enlisted Council and Enlisted Grades Council through force structure and development improvements to find the most effective, efficient mix of noncommissioned officers to secure our future, to provide purposeful and strategic career progression guidance, and leadership opportunities necessary to build the resilient leaders who can plug into any organization and succeed.

Without a doubt, Chief Kelly focused her energy on improving the quality of life for our enlisted Airmen and their families, while balancing the needs of AFRC and the Air Force. She exemplified our core values, fostered leadership development of our young Airmen and laid the groundwork for our next generation of enlisted leaders to build a more lethal, resilient and dynamic force.

I am honored to have served with Command Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly. She is, and always will be, a leader with a voice as big as her heart. Thank you, Ericka, my friend and mentor. I am both proud and humbled by your servant leadership.

As Chief Kelly moves on to the next chapter of her life, please help me welcome our new command chief, Chief Master Sgt. Timothy White. He has the biggest pair of size six boots to fill, but this selection speaks highly of his expertise, qualifications and demonstration of outstanding performance throughout his service, and as the former 4th Air Force command chief.

I am honored to have him as part of the Air Force Reserve team as we advance our strategic priorities to accelerate readiness and prioritize strategic depth, develop resilient leaders and reform our organization.

RICHARD SCOBEE
Lieutenant General
Commander, Air Force Reserve Command



Since joining the Air Force in 1987, Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly has enjoyed an exemplary career, highlighted by her service as AFRC's command chief master sergeant since 2016. These are just a few photos from Kelly's tenure as command chief that show her visiting troops in the AOR, interacting with Reservists and their family members, leading meetings focusing on enlisted force structure and development and serving alongside Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee.

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A medical team of Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 433rd Airlift Wing, Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, carries a simulated patient away from an idling Texas Army National Guard CH-47 Chinook during Operation Dust Storm at Martin-dale Army Air Field, Texas. This exercise is a joint, total-force training event with active-duty and Reserve Air Force and Army National Guard personnel. (Master Sgt. Kristian Carter)

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ON THE COVER:

The KC-46A Pegasus looms over the flightline at Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma, shortly after its historic delivery in February. Reservists in the 730th Air Mobility Training Squadron are charged with training air crews on the newest aerial refueling aircraft alongside their active duty counterparts in the 97th Air Mobility Wing. For more on the Air Force's newest airlifter, see story on page 6. (Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison)



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PEGASUS HAS LANDED

Arrival of first KC-46As signals new era in aerial refueling and mobility



When the first two KC-46A Pegasus aircraft arrived at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, in late January, it marked the dawning of a new era in aerial refueling and mobility for the Air Force and the Air Force Reserve.

Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 931st Air Refueling Wing joined with their active-duty counterparts from the 22nd Air Refueling Wing to welcome the futuristic new tankers into the Air Force inventory. Together, the wings form a classic associate unit and will work together to fly and maintain the KC-46A.

The Pegasus can carry up to 210,000 pounds of fuel and can refuel all U.S., allied and coalition military aircraft compatible with international aerial refueling procedures. It can also carry more than 100 passengers, 54 aeromedical patients or 18 cargo pallets.

“Today is a capstone of an amazing journey of preparation,

and it shows,” said Col. Phil Heseltine, 931st ARW commander. “The KC-46’s role is enormous. With passenger movement and aeromedical evacuation, we will touch the entire globe.

“To the thousands of Guard and Reserve Citizen Airmen, families, friends and civilians who serve, balancing a civilian career so we can be a part of our Air Force – which is so much bigger than each of us individually – thank you. Every time you put on this uniform, you reaffirm your oath to defend this country.”

The KC-46A will eventually replace the Air Force’s aging fleet of KC-135 Stratotankers, which have been the backbone of the refueling fleet for more than 50 years. The KC-46A will provide more refueling capability, an increased capacity for cargo and modern aeromedical evacuation capabilities.

McConnell will receive 18 tankers in the first round of deliveries and will end up with a fleet of 34. In all, the Air Force will

(Clockwise from top right) An audience attending the official arrival ceremony of the first KC-46A Pegasus at McConnell Air Force Base, Kansas, views the aircraft in person for the first time. (Tech. Sgt. Abigail Klein). Col. Phil Heseltine, 931st Air Refueling Wing commander, speaks at the McConnell arrival ceremony. (Tech. Sgt. Abigail Klein). A 97th Air Mobility Wing security forces defender guards the KC-46A after its arrival at Altus AFB, Oklahoma (Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison). The Pegasus taxis on the Altus flight line. (Tech. Sgt. Samantha Mathison).



receive 179 KC-46A tankers by 2027.

About two weeks after McConnell received its first two KC-46s, Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 730th Air Mobility Training Squadron at Altus AFB, Oklahoma, dignitaries and Air Force leaders accepted Altus’s first Pegasus aircraft.

Reservists in the 730th AMTS are charged with training air crews in the C-17 Globemaster III, KC-135 and the KC-46A. They work next to active-duty Airmen of the 97th Air Mobility Wing, training air crew members for Air Education and Training Command.

Air Force Reserve Command senior leaders highlighted the importance of the new tanker in increasing global combat mobility.

“The Air Force Reserve plays an integral role in global and national security and it starts at the school house with our

partnership with AETC,” said Maj. Gen. Kenneth Lewis, AFRC deputy commander.

The 730th AMTS, which falls under AFRC’s 507th Air Refueling wing at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma, is an associate unit that merges with active-duty Airmen in the 97th AMW to accomplish air crew training.

Col. Miles Heaslip, 507th ARW commander, highlighted the important role of the instructor team in the flight training unit.

“Reservists bring so much experience to the fight,” Heaslip said. “For our guys and gals who are out here flying, this is what they love to do. This is what they want to do.”

(Information for this article was taken from articles written by Tech. Sgt. Abigail Klein, 931st ARW public affairs; Lauren Gleason, 507th ARW public affairs; and Airman 1st Class Michaela R. Slanchik, 22nd ARW public affairs.)



MEET YOUR NEW COMMAND CHIEF

(Editor's Note: Chief Master Sgt. Timothy White is the new senior enlisted advisor to the chief of the Air Force Reserve and the command chief master sergeant for Air Force Reserve Command. He represents the highest enlisted executive level of leadership in AFRC and advises the commander on all issues regarding the readiness, training, welfare, morale, proper utilization and progress of more than 74,000 active duty and Reserve Citizen Airmen serving at more than 60 military bases worldwide. We recently had the opportunity to sit down with White and ask him a few questions about his plans for his new position. Here's what we found out.)

Q. What are your main goals as Air Force Reserve Command's command chief master sergeant?

A. As I take on this assignment, my main goal will be to deliver on Lt. Gen. Scobee's strategic priorities of prioritizing strategic depth and accelerating readiness, developing resilient leaders, and reforming our organization. Because the bulk of our force is enlisted, the bulk of responsibility in meeting these priorities will rely with us – the enlisted force. I am taking a careful look at each of these priorities and plan to engage with

the Air Force Reserve Senior Enlisted Council for the best course of action in meeting these priorities.

Q. What are you most looking forward to as you settle into your new position?

A. Like anything else, you have to be coachable. With 100 percent certainty, no matter what the setting, I will never be the smartest guy in the room. I am looking forward to learning from experts in the field to be as efficient as possible. I am also looking forward to meeting the Pentagon team as well as the headquarters team and learning about all the amazing things they do, so we can collectively get down to business of taking care of Airmen.

Q. What do you think are some of the biggest challenges facing AFRC today?

A. We have numerous challenges facing AFRC today, including recruitment and retention, readiness, deployability and fiscal constraints, just to name a few. It really comes down to trust. Anything and everything we do revolves around trust. I'm not implying there is a lack of trust, but there are systemic

programs and processes in place that have slowly eroded some of the trust we have among Reservists in the field.

When Congress allocates funds, it trusts we will be ready to fly, fight and win in any domain. When Airmen perform duty, they trust they will be paid on time. When members disclose they've sought medical or mental health assistance to help cope with life challenges, they trust they will not be automatically placed in a no-pay, no-points status for being honest. When we place personnel in leadership positions, Airmen trust leader-subordinate relationships will be transformational, not transactional. When we ask potential ART (Air Reserve Technician) or civilian teammates to forego other employment opportunities to join the Reserve, they trust it won't take a minimum of 180 days to join the team. When America lends us its sons and daughters, America is trusting her sons and daughters will be able to work and thrive in a harassment-free environment.

The National Defense Strategy states policies are not written in stone. Yet, we tend to follow policies, rules and old methods of thinking, simply because we've always done it that way. Instead, we need to take a hard look at how we conduct business, especially when there is a smarter way of doing things.

Lt. Gen. Scobee has already implemented several initiatives, including direct hiring authority, medical reform, and an aggressive recruitment and retention program in an effort to restore trust. We have great leaders and visionaries in place across the command, so I have no doubt we will tackle any challenge ahead.

Q. What are some of the highlights of your military career so far?

A. I consider every rank and every assignment highlights because I've always strived to put fourth maximum effort. Being the command chief of the 452nd Air Mobility Wing was one for sure, because I had a direct impact on the direction of the wing. I believe the wing command chief position (not the command chief himself/herself) is one of the most important positions in the wing, because that position assists the wing commander in setting the tone of the wing. You can contribute a well-functioning wing to good leadership, and vice versa.

Being the 4th Air Force command chief has to be my most favorite assignment thus far. It has nothing to do with the title, it was the impact and influence the position itself has over the units we support. Assisting in the selection, mentoring and development of wing command chiefs was what I enjoyed most. Again, I believe wing command chiefs are one of the most critical positions in the command, and I was fortunate to be part of putting some great command chiefs in place. I also had the honor of visiting and

meeting thousands of Airmen who do great things for this country and that was awesome all in itself.

Witnessing the career success of others, or seeing others obtain personal or professional goals, has always been a highlight for me. I'm always excited to see the promotion roster, monthly and annual award winner announcements, and STEP (Stripes for Exceptional Performers) II announcements, because it meant some people have met personal or professional goals. A special highlight was watching Master Sgt. Kit Lui, from the 433rd Airlift Wing, walk across the stage to accept his 2018 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year Award. I know the amount of effort and teamwork it took for Kit to get on stage, so it felt like there was a bunch of people standing right next to him. I recently ran into Kit and he is just excited now as he was then. Kit, along with every 12 OAY winner, is a true example of dedication and teamwork.

Without a doubt, the thing I will miss the most about leaving 4th Air Force is the relationship I had with my wingman, mentor, and friend, Maj. Gen. Randall Ogden and his wife, Donita. They are wonderful people who treated Edith and me like family. It's possible there's one out there, but I've never seen a leader who cares more for people than Maj. Gen. Ogden. No matter who you are, he treats everyone with the same amount of dignity and respect he shows to Lt. Gen. Scobee. He encouraged and supported me from the very start, and gave me the leeway to be the command chief I wanted to be. I never viewed a single day on the job as work, and if my wife didn't have issue with it, I'd work for that man for free. That's the type of leader he is. He is one of the finest officers and human beings I have ever known.



(Opposite page) Chief Master Sgt. Timothy White is AFRC's new command chief master sergeant. (Above) White, former 4th Air Force command chief, expresses pride in the 4th along with Maj. Gen. Randall Ogden, 4th AF commander, and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. David Goldfein.

Q. Tell me a little about your civilian career?

A. As a civilian, I am a sheriff's sergeant for the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, located in Southern California. I've been a law enforcement officer for approximately 19 years, and have served in numerous assignments, working alongside some of the top professionals in the business. I like to think I'm pretty good at what I do because I place the same amount of effort into police work as I do in being a Reservist. The best way I can describe both careers is being a cop is what I do, but being a Citizen Airmen is what I was meant to do.

Q. How has being a Reservist helped you in your civilian job and vice versa?

A. Both jobs require significant amounts of leadership and professionalism. Being a Reservist has helped me tremendously. Nearly every leadership trait and leadership method I apply in law enforcement, I can associate it with the leadership gleaned from being a Reservist. Being a Reservist has also made me a better supervisor. Critical thinking and the ability to think strategically during critical situations are some of the things I've learned in the Reserve.

It's definitely a two-way street, as I rely on the training and experience I've received in my law enforcement profession to help me lead and make decisions that impact our Airmen daily. When adversity arises, I often find myself reflecting on my experiences as a police officer to help me navigate through the adversity. The County of Riverside and the Riverside County Sheriff's Department are huge supporters of the military,

White, second from left, said he has had countless mentors throughout his Air Force career. "Any time an Airman takes the time to share ideas on how to make his or her life better, that's a mentoring moment," he said.



and they have supported me beyond what the law requires. The very few times I've had to explain my absence at work to perform military duty or training, I'd jokingly reply the sheriff's department benefits from the training and leadership skills the Air Force is paying for. I am blessed and fortunate to work for such a professional and supportive organization, and look forward to returning to the department once my tour is completed.

Q. Who are some of your mentors and what advice have they given you that has helped you in your career?

A. In situation like these, you hate to mention anyone by name, because for every one you mention, you are leaving out at least two. I grew up through the ranks at Travis AFB, and almost every chief on that base were mentors of mine. The Chiefs Group at Travis was known as the "Enlisted Mafia," because nothing stood in their way of taking care of Airmen. Chiefs Robert Trojanowski, Terry Kirkbride, Gregg McGee, Bill Morrissey, Mike McGillivray, Mike Protsman, Kirk Stewart and Kari Sumner are just a few. It's not so much what they said, it's what they did. They led by example and placed me in positions to succeed, while allowing me to fail. I am a firm believer that once you reach the point of knowing your job, and there's no one around you who can do your job, then you have not done your job. Team Travis taught me that.

I've been mentored by peers and subordinates alike. Any time an Airman takes the time to share ideas on how to make his or her life better, that's a mentoring moment. Senior Master Sgt. Dawn Perez and Staff Sgt. Shelby Horn are two irreplaceable members of my team, and whenever they start a conversation with, "Chief, I think you should....," that's a mentorship moment, because it translates into I was about to screw something up. I've always considered the source and not the rank when heeding advice, so mentorship for me comes in various forums.

AFRC Command Chief Ericka Kelly is a mentor of mine. She is a wonderful human being who equally cares for every Airman she meets. She will go out of her way to assist an Airman in need, regardless of component or status, because that's the type of leader she is. Chief Kelly has a positive impact on all those who she interacts with, simply because of the way she carries herself. Her knowledge and wisdom has been crucial to my transition, I will continue to seek her mentorship and advice long after she is retired. In addition to Chief Kelly, Maj. Gen. John Flournoy, Brig. Gen. Russel Muncy, Brig. Gen. Matthew Burger, Col. Steve Browning and Col. Michael Sovitsky were just a few officers who personally mentored me along the way. I owe them all a debt of gratitude.

I recently had almost an entire day of one-on-one mentoring from Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force, Kaleth Wright. CMSAF Wright was preparing for Congressional testimony, and it meant a lot that he took time out of his day because he wanted me to be successful in my new assignment. When I mentioned I was still somewhat in shock after being named the senior enlisted advisor to the chief of Air Force Reserve, Chief Wright replied he got over the shock of being selected CMSAF within the first week of being on the job, because he had Airmen to take care of. Speaking of advice, Chief Wright said, "You could spend your entire (Pentagon) tour admiring pictures on the wall and wondering how you got here, and nothing will ever get done. You got the job; you're in the seat; it's time to go to work." When Chief Wright gives you some direct leadership like that, you can't help but to act on it. It was some of the best advice one-on-one mentorship periods of my entire career.

Q. What message would you have for young people who are thinking about joining the Air Force Reserve?

A. If it's leadership you are looking for, we got it. If it's educational assistance or technical training you are looking for, we got it. If it's experience or camaraderie you are looking for, we got it. Whatever you're looking for, we got it. If you join the Reserve, your immediate family will grow by 74,000. If you count our regular Air Force and Air National Guard family, your family will grow by 530,000. Being a Reservist is a family business and joining the Reserve has been one of the best decisions in my life.

Q. Tell me a little about your family and how have they helped you be successful in life?

A. I am blessed to have the greatest wife in the word, Edith, the best son in the word, Jordan (age 25), and two beautiful daughters, Natalia and Gabby (ages 18 and 13). Jordan recently graduated college and is seeking a career as a firefighter. Natalia is currently in college with aspirations of being a family counselor. Gabby is a straight A student, ASB president and captain of the school's debate team. My family is my rock, and there is no way I can take on this journey without them.

Like the majority of spouses or significant others who support those who serve, Edith is the cornerstone of our family. She gave up her career to support my career. People mistakenly think I have a tough job, but her job as a stay-at-home mom is two to three times tougher than mine. Gabby will be working on Capitol Hill or living on Pennsylvania Avenue one day, and it will be because of Edith.

When I initially applied for this assignment, it wasn't the extensive travel or long hours that worried me. It was the idea of placing a larger share of the household burden on Edith's shoulders. Edith assured me she would take up the slack and



White said his wife, Edith, is the cornerstone of their family. "She gave up her career to support my career," he said.

carry my weight so I could be 100 percent focused on serving Airmen.

The support I receive from my family helps remind me that spouses, significant others and family support structures are the sources of strength that keep the military member going. So it's critical that we install, fund and continue to support family support programs and initiatives that support the military family.

Q. What do you like to do in your free time?

A. I am a sports junkie with strict allegiances to the Oakland Raiders and the Los Angeles Lakers. When football season rolls around, I'm ashamed to admit I am an absent husband and father. I play in several fantasy football leagues and it's common for Edith to find me working the waiver wire every Wednesday morning around 2 a.m. I enjoy physical fitness and deep-sea fishing when I have the time. Because I don't have an abundance of free time, I mostly enjoy spending any time I have with family.

Q. Are there any final thoughts/messages you would like to send out to all of the Reserve Citizen Airmen?

A. I am honored and humbled to serve as your command chief, and I look forward to earning your trust!



Col. Brian Betts with his Gibson Government Series Flying V guitar.

Not-So-Quiet Professional IMA likes to get ***LOUD*** with his rock band

Story By Tech. Sgt. Sam King • Photos by Master Sgt. Stephen Schester

During duty hours, Col. Brian “Dickey” Betts is a quiet professional – an instructor pilot within Air Force Special Operations Command. Off duty, however, Betts likes to get loud on his guitar with his Airmen-comprised rock band, “Call for Fire.”

The jam band recently had its biggest performance to date at the Tech. Sgt. John Chapman Medal of Honor celebration in October at Hurlburt Field, Florida. “Call for Fire” opened for country music headliners “Big and Rich” on Hurlburt’s flightline in front of a couple thousand people.

It was a long journey from garage practices in 1996. Betts, who currently serves as an individual mobilization augmentee with an Air Force career that spans 30 years, has played guitar since eighth grade and has been in rock bands since high school.

His first concert in front of people came at a church function... and it couldn’t have gone worse. Betts realized too late his amplifier had no power or even an

outlet to plug into.

“I made a quick decision to just go with what I had and completely faked it,” said the Missouri native. “I just played along without any sound. People came up to me afterwards and complimented me on how good I sounded. I hope they were just trying to compliment me and not saying I sounded better with the sound off.”

Only a year after he was commissioned, he joined his first military-member band in 1989 playing at base functions. He joined another band with each new assignment until he arrived at Hurlburt Field in 1996. There he met many of the current members of “Call for Fire,” including then-Lt. Col. Brad Webb. Webb has since progressed to the rank of lieutenant general and is currently the AFSOC commander. Webb rocked the bass in those early sessions, before switching to the guitar.

The line-up for the band changed over the years due to military commitments.

“The one downside of playing with all military members is at some point, most of the band members eventually PCS,” said Betts, who has played with five different bands during his Air Force career. “That can lead to the band dissolving if replacement players can’t be found.”

Despite their busy schedules and military obligations, the core members of “Call for Fire” play every chance their schedule allows.

“We try to get together as much as possible when I’m (at Hurlburt), as well as working around Lt. Gen. Webb’s schedule,” said Betts, a 747 aircraft captain in his civilian capacity. “We usually practice at least once a week as a band when I am in town.”

With the constant demand of life and the special operations lifestyle, getting the band together to play can be therapeutic. “It is a great stress reliever to get together with the rest of the band and have a blast just jamming,” said Betts, adding that he considers playing the guitar somewhere between a hobby and a passion.

He has a collection of eight guitars to choose from when he is ready to jam, but he does have a clear favorite – the Gibson Government Series Flying V.

“Ever since I began playing guitar I’ve been in love with the Flying V,” said the 54-year-old, whose call sign origin is from Allman Brothers lead guitarist Dickey Betts. “I’ve always thought it was one of the coolest guitar designs. It has an awesome tone and just screams rock and roll.”

Speaking of screaming, Betts sings on about five songs on the band’s playlist, which includes everything from Aerosmith to Ozzie. But, his true talent is playing the axe.

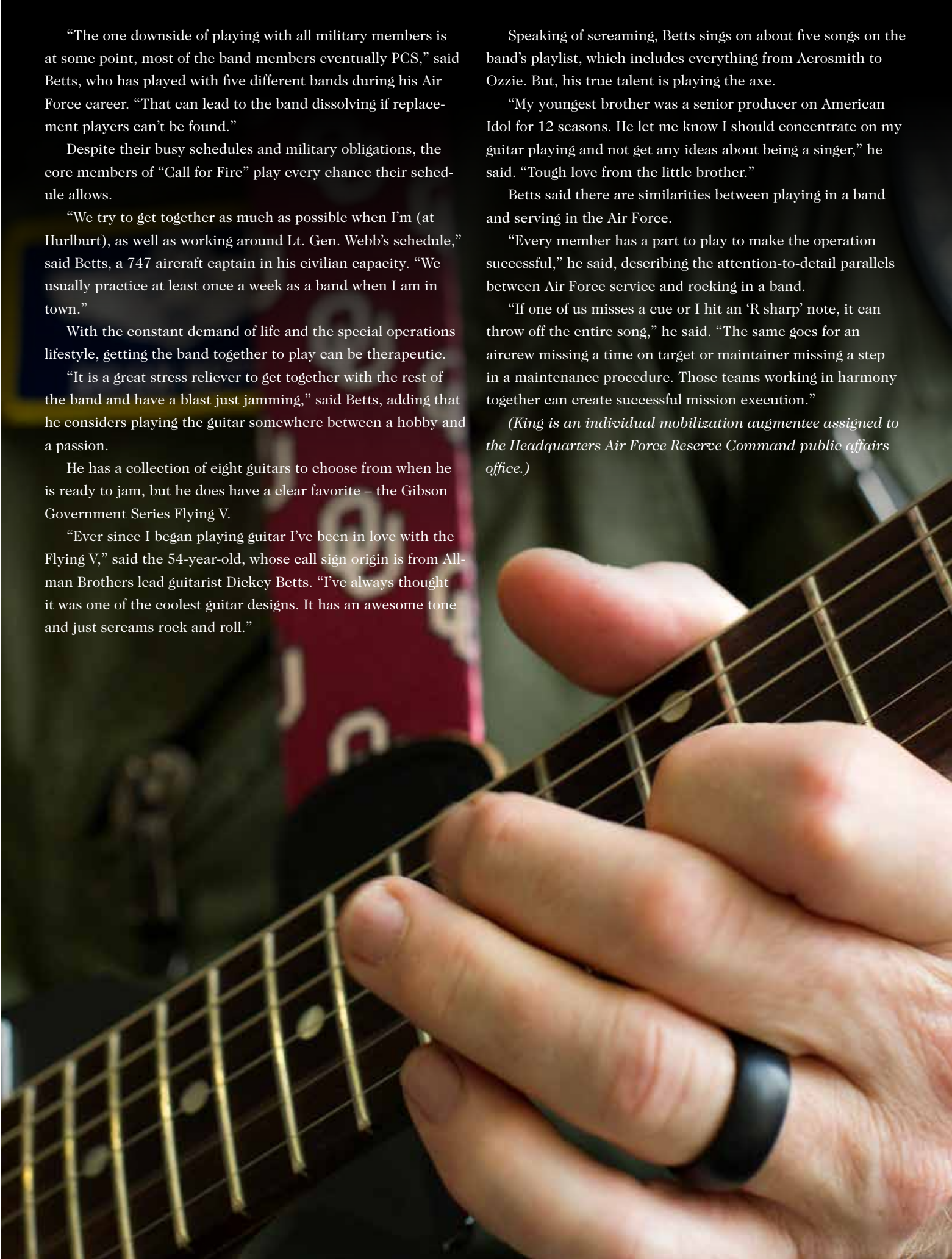
“My youngest brother was a senior producer on American Idol for 12 seasons. He let me know I should concentrate on my guitar playing and not get any ideas about being a singer,” he said. “Tough love from the little brother.”

Betts said there are similarities between playing in a band and serving in the Air Force.

“Every member has a part to play to make the operation successful,” he said, describing the attention-to-detail parallels between Air Force service and rocking in a band.

“If one of us misses a cue or I hit an ‘R sharp’ note, it can throw off the entire song,” he said. “The same goes for an aircrew missing a time on target or maintainer missing a step in a maintenance procedure. Those teams working in harmony together can create successful mission execution.”

(King is an individual mobilization augmentee assigned to the Headquarters Air Force Reserve Command public affairs office.)





Staff Sgt. Andrew Martin, 944th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron crew chief, at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, is an Air Reserve Technician working out of the 61st Aircraft Maintenance Unit. He was scheduled to attend Officer Training School in March and will return to Luke for the F-35 Basic Qualification Course.

From Crew Chief to Cockpit

F-35 maintainer is on his way to becoming an F-35 pilot

Story and Photos By Staff Sgt. Lausanne Kinder

Staff Sgt. Andrew Martin, a Reserve Citizen Airman crew chief assigned to the 944th Fighter Wing's Aircraft Maintenance Squadron at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, knew at the age of 5 he wanted to be a pilot.

"My grandfather got me one flying lesson per month starting when I was 13 and I wanted nothing else," Martin said. "Back then I was flying a Piper Warrior."

When he was 17, he visited his local recruiter and inquired about becoming an Air Force pilot. Told he would need a college degree first, he looked at other options that might eventually help him reach his ultimate goal.

"I looked through (the recruiter's) big book of jobs and decided on crew chief because I figured working on airplanes would get me a job if I ever left the Air Force," he said. "Also, I figured if I couldn't fly them, it would be cool to maintain them every day."

After finishing technical school in 2010, Martin was stationed at Luke with the active duty 308th Fighter Squadron's Aircraft Maintenance Unit before a permanent change of assignment to the 310th Fighter Squadron's AMU in 2013.

Wherever he went, Martin never forgot about his dream of becoming an Air Force pilot and would ask all the pilots he met about their career path.

The maintainer spent five years on active duty before transitioning to the Arizona Air National Guard as an F-16 crew chief before making the move to F-35 crew chief for the Air Force Reserve. Throughout his military career, Martin worked toward earning his college degree and pursued his civilian pilot career.

One of the pilots Martin met was Lt. Col. David Salisbury, an F-16 instructor pilot at the time who currently serves as the AFRC Force Generation Center deputy chief of the Security Co-

operation and Exercise Division, Robins AFB, Georgia. Salisbury took an interest in Martin after hearing he was pursuing flying outside of the military.

"At one point during his flight training, Martin's flight gear was

“I was in disbelief because I had been working toward this for the better part of a decade and couldn't believe what I was hearing.”

- Staff Sgt. Andrew Martin

stolen out of his car," Salisbury said. "I loaned him some of my flight equipment so he could continue his training. Since I also have my civilian pilot instructor license, I went flying with him and shared some of the lessons I have learned along the way."

By the end of 2017, Martin had earned his bachelor's degree, instrument pilot rating, commercial pilot license and Certified Flight Instructor's license. He worked as a civilian flight instructor in the mornings, a crew chief in the evenings and flew on the weekends.

After working as a flight instructor for 11 months, he had logged 350 hours as an instructor pilot and more than 600 total flying hours, all while maintaining his Air Reserve Technician job as a crew chief.

"I recently returned from a non-flying assignment, and now that Martin is a civilian flight instructor, he was able to return the favor and help me get my flying currency back after three years of not flying," Salisbury said. "It was great to see everything come full circle."

Once Martin completed all of the training and experience requirements, he was within reach of his dream. He gathered letters of recommendation, completed the appropriate application and interviewed with members of his chain of command, including Col. Bryan Cook, 944th FW commander.

"My ultimate hope for Martin was for him to become an officer and a fighter pilot in the U.S. Air Force," Salisbury said. "It takes a lot of dedication to pace yourself and manage your money to obtain the appropriate experience and flight hours required to earn all of the different pilot ratings to achieve the level of instructor."

After several weeks, Martin was given the chance to interview for a spot in the first AFRC F-35 Basic Qualification Course.

"I was in disbelief because I had been working toward this for the better part of a decade and couldn't believe what I was hearing," Martin said.

"This is so meaningful to me because there were some very difficult times that lasted a number of years that I didn't think would have a solution," he said. "However, through hard work and a lot of support, I was able to overcome those challenges and have an opportunity like this."

His 22-year dream is finally coming true. Martin's application was approved and he was scheduled to attend Officer Training School in March. After that comes the F-35 B course.

Salisbury shared his advice for those who want to pursue a path similar to Martin's.

"There will most likely be setbacks, so keeping your eyes on the horizon and persevering is key to moving toward whatever you want to accomplish," he said. "Don't neglect your current job while working toward your goal. Be an expert in whatever job you're doing and people will recognize your dedication and help you open doors to great future opportunities."

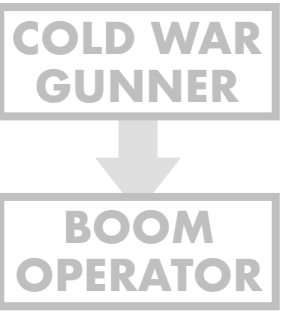
(Kinder is assigned to the 944th FW public affairs office.)

Martin finishes preparing an F-35 cockpit for flight.





Tech Sgt. Corey Palmer has served as a tail gunner in the B-52, a flight engineer on the C-130 and is now in training to become a boom operator on the KC-135. The photos at left show Palmer at various points throughout his career. (Courtesy photos)



BOMBS TO BOOM

**RESERVE CITIZEN AIRMAN
GOES FROM COLD WAR GUNNER
TO PRESENT-DAY BOOM OPERATOR**
BY STAFF SGT. JOSHUA WILLIAMS

Bomber, airlift and now refueling. Those are the incredible missions of one Niagara Falls Reserve Citizen Airman.

Tech. Sgt. Corey Palmer, 50, is currently attending in-flight refueling training – more commonly known as Boom School – at Altus Air Force Base, Oklahoma.

His military career started in 1988 as an active-duty tail gunner in the B-52. When that crew position went away, he decided to leave the service. After a 20-year break in service, he decided to jump back in.

“I wanted a flying position, that’s all I knew,” said Palmer, who when he’s not travelling 500 miles an hour and refueling other aircraft at 40,000 feet in altitude works as an accounts manager for a trucking company. “I love planes just as much as I did when I was a kid. It’s a love that’s never left me.”

Palmer’s long journey to Boom School started on active duty as a tail gunner in the B-52 in 1988, the last year of Ronald Rea-

gan’s presidency as the Cold War was winding down.

“As they phased out the tail gunner in the B-52, they offered people an early-out. I took it and started my own trucking business,” he said. Twenty years later, Palmer got the itch to zip up his flight suit again in 2010 and began looking for aircrew positions in the Air Force Reserve.

“I just knew I wanted to fly again. I was getting old, so I needed to get back in before the age limit,” Palmer said.

Joining back up in 2010, Palmer enlisted as a Reservist with the 914th Airlift Wing, Niagara Falls Air Reserve Station, New York, as a C-130 flight engineer. When the 914th AW converted to an air refueling wing in June 2017, the opportunity to become a boomer presented itself.

Palmer said the biggest change he’s seen in the Air Force since he first joined in 1988 is the technology.

“Our squadron might have had four computers when I first

joined,” he said. “Now, air crews have all of their manuals and maps on an iPad.”

He added that the one part that hasn’t changed is the quality of people who serve as air crew members.

“Each air crew has so much pride in their aircraft,” Palmer said. “I constantly remind myself that I’m part of something big.”

Looking forward, Palmer said he’s excited about the refueling mission and has his sights set on when he refuels his first B-52.

“Odds are pretty good I actually flew on that aircraft,” he said. “That’s pretty special.”

Of the three aircraft he’s served on, Palmer said the B-52 is his favorite.

“This is probably going to bug the C-130 guys, but I just loved flying in the 52,” Palmer said. “It’s incredible that it even flies. ... and it’s going to keep flying. It’s crazy to think that the last B-52 pilot isn’t even born yet.”

As young men and women are joining the military and getting into shape, Palmer stays active with his two teenage kids.

“I play a lot of basketball with my son,” Palmer said. “I love running around the court against guys half my age. Honestly though, I don’t really think about my age.”

In Boom School, Palmer said he uses his experience to help mentor those coming up through the ranks.

“It’s all part of being something bigger,” he said. “Very few people in the Air Force actually get to fly. It’s something you don’t take for granted.”

It’s that passion for aviation that continues to motivate the former tail gunner.

“When I was a kid, a plane would fly overhead and I would stop and stare into the sky. I still do it today.”

(Williams is assigned to the 914th Air Refueling Wing public affairs office.)



Local partnerships with civilian hospitals have long been a pillar of training for military surgeons in the United States. Maj. Travis Wittick helped come up with a similar partnership for doctors stationed overseas.

CLINICAL CURRENCY

Reserve Citizen Airman improves joint medical training overseas

By Master Sgt. Peter R. Miller

A Reserve Citizen Airman assigned to the 916th Air Refueling Wing, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina, is helping make sure military doctors stationed overseas are trained and ready to do their jobs.

Local partnerships with civilian hospitals have long been a pillar of training for military surgeons in the United States. Due to the young, healthy

active-duty patient population, military doctors stationed stateside often supplement their clinical currency by seeing patients in civilian hospitals.

Until now, the services did not have a similar program in place for doctors stationed overseas.

That's where Maj. Travis Wittick comes in. A Reservist assigned to the 916th Aerospace Medical Squadron, Wittick performed annual tour training

with the 48th Medical Group at Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England in 2018. While there, he was asked to devise a plan to scale a medical training platform to military medical staff stationed overseas.

The Joint Platform for European Clinical Currency will be the first and only joint medical training platform outside the continental United States, Wittick said.

Currently, six physicians with Lakenheath's 48th MDG regularly work in local off-base hospitals, including Addenbrooke's Hospital in Cambridge, to keep up their clinical currency skills. Wittick's plan would scale the current platform from just six Air Force physicians to a future state of more than 300 physicians, nurses and medical support staff from the Air Force, Army and Navy.

The JPECC idea was warmly embraced by the Lakenheath command, Wittick said.

"I give Lakenheath a lot of credit because they asked me to review the program, create a roadmap and recommend the next steps," he said. "They were passionate about it, and their passion fed my passion. This was one of their top priorities."

Several stateside military hospitals have formed robust partnerships with local civilian medical facilities, Wittick said. Examples of these programs include the Center for Sustainment of Trauma and Readiness Skills partnership with the University of Maryland Medical Center and the Sustained Medal and Readiness Training Program piloted by the 99th Medical Group at Nellis AFB, Nevada. In these arrangements, military doctors rotate through high-volume civilian hospitals to remain clinically current on their skills.

"Your average civilian population is older, sicker and needs more complex care than active-duty Airmen," Wittick said. "Our docs get great opportunities off base to see complex care."

Wittick used the SMART program staffing model as a baseline for JPECC. The staffing model would consist of one field grade officer, one senior non-commissioned officer and one NCO to administer the program. These individuals would also be able to rotate through the local hospitals themselves.

"JPECC is a phenomenal program for readiness, for getting our surgeons ready for war by seeing highly complex, high-acuity care," Wittick said.

"Our surgeons love it. It helps our relations between the U.S. and the U.K. It's a win-win. We'd love to expand this program to all our physicians, nurses and technicians."

Wittick said one of the reasons he left active duty was so he could one day start his own company.

"Getting the opportunity to do something entrepreneurial while still serving in the military was a breath of fresh air," he said. "I've been very encouraged during my time in the Air Force Reserve and by the active-duty folks at Lakenheath who had the vision to build something of value for patients across Europe. Together, we're innovators."

(Miller is assigned to the public affairs office at the 916th ARW)

Wittick, a Reserve Citizen Airman assigned to the 916th Aerospace Medical Squadron, Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, North Carolina, came up with his plan while performing annual tour training with the 48th Medical Group at Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England in 2018.



ONCE A FALCON, ALWAYS A FALCON

AFRC general, Air Force Academy football standout reflects on career

By Master Sgt. Chance Babin

A standout defensive end at the Air Force Academy, Christian Funk (No. 96) was named the Western Athletic Conference Co-Defensive Player of the Year in 1984. (Courtesy photo)



Brig. Gen. Christian Funk has come a long way since his days as a standout defensive end on the Air Force Academy football team in the early 1980s.

From fighter pilot to wing commander to his current assignment as the deputy director of strategy, concepts and assessments for the deputy chief of staff for strategic plans and requirements, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, at the Pentagon, Funk has navigated a very successful Air Force career.

Whenever he has the opportunity, he likes to navigate his way back to his alma mater to show his support for the Air Force Academy football team and all of the Academy's cadets.

Late in the 2018 football season, Funk was back on the field with his beloved Falcon football team. This night, he was the honorary captain during the coin toss at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, where he would be honored for his time as a member of the AFA team and his Air Force career.

"It's a great honor to represent the Air Force, Air Force Reserve Command and the U.S. Air Force Academy," the general



Now a brigadier general in the Air Force Reserve, Funk still keeps close ties with the Air Force Academy football team. Here he chats with the Falcons head coach, Troy Calhoun. (Master Sgt. Chance Babin)

said. "It's all I've ever known, being in the Air Force. It's been my entire adult life and my family's life. Seeing the Falcons play, especially having the privilege to be on the sidelines with the team, is always a humbling experience. Those kids were me and my teammates 35 years ago. It's an ageless experience that was shared by many alumni on the sidelines Friday night at UNLV."

The general watched the first half from the AFA sideline and it was obvious being close to his former team brought out his competitive juices. He even went behind the bench when the defense was being gashed early in the game, listening to the coaches and players discuss what took place on a UNLV touchdown drive.

"It's still so nerve racking, watching the game, wishing I could do more than just cheer or worry," he said. "I wanted to listen to the coach's adjustments and the interaction with the players and how they responded."

Although Funk's military career has taken him all around the world, he still stays close to the academic institution and foot-

ball team where it all started for him.

"The program develops world-class teams and individuals," he said. "There is nothing like being an Academy intercollegiate athlete. We have all the demands of being a student and all the demands of competing at the Division 1 level – a full class schedule and a full athletic schedule, plus all the cadet activities."

Being a student-athlete at the Air Force Academy helped shape the Air Force officer and leader Funk has become.

"I think the biggest thing is knowing you aren't alone – you're an important part of a big team. Someone is there to pick up your slack or I'm there to pick up someone else," he said. "I learned I can't do my job well unless everyone else did their job. That started with my instructors, helping me learn so I could stay on the team. My squadron mates getting through the inspections and drills. The equipment managers having our stuff ready to go. The coaches having everything organized and using every single second we had left in the day to watch film and get everything done in practice. My teammates getting their assign-

ment done so we could make the tackle.”

Growing up in Fayetteville, North Carolina, Funk attended Pine Forest High School, where he was coached by Gary Weller. He said he was recruited by the service academics and a few east coast teams to play football.

“Coach Weller’s life story is inspirational, and I’ve always kept in touch with him,” Funk said. “He was involved in a tragic accident in 2004 and has been in a wheelchair ever since. I had him come speak to the fighter wing at Homestead (Air Reserve Base, Florida). He always touches lives and has a foundation set up to give scholarships to high school student athletes in Fayetteville.”

Funk decided to attend the Air Force Academy, like his older brother. He became a four-year letterman and was the Western Athletic Conference Co-Defensive Player of the Year his senior season in 1984. He also garnered AFA Male Athlete of the Year honors in 1985. He finished his career with 248 tackles, 22 tackles for loss, three fumble recoveries, two caused fumbles and four blocked kicks.

Funk spent the 1985 season as a graduate assistant at the academy under Coach Fisher DeBerry. The Falcons had their greatest season ever that year. The team finished the season 12-1, losing only to Brigham Young University. Had they beat the Cougars, they would have most likely had the opportunity to play for a national championship. The Falcons ended the season ranked fifth in the nation after beating the University of Texas in the Bluebonnet Bowl.

After that season, Funk moved on and began his military career. But he has never lost contact with the football program.

“I have always stayed in touch with Coach DeBerry and now Coach (Troy) Calhoun,” he said. “Coach Calhoun is an ’89 grad, and he was on the freshman team when I was coaching as a



Funk said having a strong family support system has been critical to his success. Here, he watches an Air Force Academy game with his wife, Lori. (Master Sgt. Chance Babin)

graduate assistant. I always make sure I’m in contact with the Blue and Silver Club and the Bolt Brotherhood. I have season tickets, I donate. I help when I’m asked and I’m always available when anyone comes to my base or community.”

In addition to supporting the Academy, Funk is also an avid supporter of Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service.

“I’m a huge fan of recruiting,” he said. “Maybe it’s the football player and coach in me, but it’s exciting to talk to people and see their excitement about coming into the military. The questions and answers, the light bulb coming on, that look on their face of realizing their possible future and the opportunities they get. Recruiting is just making sure we get the right people to take our place and make sure we can sleep at night and that our grandkids can grow up with all the freedoms we have and for which we have worked so hard. It’s our duty to bring in the best people we know can cut it in this very difficult time for our country.”

While he was the installation commander at Homestead, Funk was honored by AFRC Recruiting Service as the Wing Commander of the Year, given to the commander who does the most to support recruiting efforts.

“The only thing I did was try to be part of the recruiting team. I listened to their great ideas and tried to help them as much as I could with their vision,” he said. “I was the wing and installation commander, but they were the experts. The little things mattered – making sure training was available, funds were available and support was available. Simple things like trying to get the recruiting flight nested in the Force Support Squadron so the recruit didn’t have to move all over the wing to get in-processed. Making sure the training and indoctrination flight had a place to meet and train.”

While Funk has supported recruiting efforts as a commander, he has also done some recruiting at home. Using the Get One Now peer referral program, the general referred his son, Hugh, to join the Reserve. The peer referral program allows Reservists and civilian employees to refer a family member or friend to join the Reserve. Once a referral is deemed a qualified lead, the person submitting the lead is eligible for a host of awards. The general had the honor of presiding at his son’s enlistment.

“It was the first time I’ve ever had to read the oath from a piece of paper,” he said. “I started, ‘I, state your name’ and I looked up at him to repeat it and I lost it. Very embarrassing! But it was a great honor to swear my son in at Homestead.”

Now Senior Airman Funk is part of the USAFA jump team, Wings of Blue, assigned to the 70th Flying Training Squadron in Colorado Springs. He’s an instructor and evaluator in many skydiving disciplines.

“We are a typical Air Force father and son,” the general said. “He was 3 when I did my first deployment and 23 when I got home from my last deployment. My wife, Lori, kept the home together mostly. She and I are both Army brats who were raised



In addition to being a big supporter of the Air Force Academy, Funk is an avid supporter of Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service. Using the Get One Now referral program, the general referred his son, Hugh, to join the Reserve. Here, he enlists Hugh into the Reserve. (Courtesy photo)

with fathers in Vietnam for several tours, so she knows her way around a father and husband being gone.”

One thing the general, his father and his son have in common is the love of skydiving. The general’s father flew the Army’s Golden Knights as a UH-1 pilot and was a jumper as well. Now, the general and his son continue the family tradition.

“I started jumping in 1986 and we started jumping together in 2004 at Fort Bragg when he just turned 17,” the general said. “We’ve been jumping together as much as we can since. He’s made more than 8,500 jumps now to my 360. He is a tandem instructor/evaluator and an Air Force firefighter. I’m incredibly proud of serving with him.”

Funk said one of his mentors, retired Army Sergeant Major Alcee Richardson, a former Golden Knight, later became a mentor to his son.

“He always imparted his experience and wisdom to Hugh and is a big part of his life,” Funk said. “It was heartwarming to see a guy who influenced my life also influencing my son’s life. Alcee, my dad and I were on the drop zone for Hugh’s first jump and they pinned his first set of jump wings on him. It was a very proud moment.

“That trip we made back to Fort Bragg to get his civilian rating is one of the most memorable trips of our lifetime. It was the summer my dad turned 70 and we were exhausted every day.

Great memories.”

As the general reflected back on his career, he realized he’s been very blessed.

“I was fortunate enough to get the aircraft I love – the F-16 – and even fly a second fighter I always wanted to fly – the A-10 – for a couple years,” Funk said. “With more than 4,000 flying hours – including test pilot, instructor and evaluator, a ton of deployments, a special operations tour as a fire support officer, and a group deputy commander, it’s been an incredible operational career.”

He said having a strong family support system has been critical to his success.

“Lori and I have been together from high school through the Academy and then into married life right after I graduated,” he said. “We’ve shared memories and made great friends. There is only an ‘us,’ because we’ve been together since we were teenagers. She’s held down the fort, raised our children and done all the things military spouses have done throughout history. We’ve moved more than 15 times and separated over as many deployments. She’s run things by herself many years and had seven Christmases without me in the house. I certainly couldn’t have done this without her.”

For more information on the Get1Now peer referral program, go to <https://www.get1now.us/> or download the app.



Opposite page, Master Sgt. Gabriel Silva holds the Mike Mungavin Award for being Air Force Reserve Command's top recruiter for 2018. With Silva are Col. Tim Martz, AFRC Recruiting Service commander; Mungavin, Chief Master Sgt. Ericka Kelly, AFRC command chief master sergeant; and Chief Master Sgt. Jean Vargo, RS manager. (Master Sgt. Chance Babin). At right, Silva, top row, second from left, is shown with his youth soccer team in Ecuador. (courtesy photo).



A LONG ROAD TO THE TOP

Trio of command's best recruiters have their roots in Ecuador

By Master Sgt. Chance Babin

When Master Sgt. Gabriel Silva won Air Force Reserve Command Recruiting Service's Mike Mungavin Award for 2018, given to the top recruiter in AFRC, it completed a long journey for him.

As a 12-year-old boy, Silva and his family immigrated to the United States from Ecuador. He didn't speak a word of English, but he was excited about his new country and the opportunities it offered.

"I had no instruction in English, so the learning curve for me was big," Silva, currently an officer accessions recruiter assigned to Joint Base Andrews, Maryland, said. "Kids in the '90s were a bit harsh. They made fun of the way I spoke and how I dressed a lot. But I learned a lot of resiliency and adaptability early on. I worked really hard to learn and to fit in. It took me about six months to start communicating effectively and about a year and a half to be fully proficient."

He said learning the culture was the easy part. "I was young and easily molded by my environment," he said. "So, as my knowledge grew so did my assimilation to the new environment."

He began his education in the United States at a Catholic school and credits his teachers with helping him make the transition to a new country.

"All the education I received was great," he said. "Surprisingly, there were not a lot of nuns, but I remember my first teacher, Mrs. Talty. She was very patient and caring and she was a big help for me. I do feel I was ahead because of the education I received in Ecuador, so school was never hard for me academically."

Silva's introduction to the military came when he was in high school and saw a recruiter for the first time.

"Thinking back, a big part of my childhood was spent adapting and trying to fit in," he said. "I saw this recruiter walk into

the school and he was able to easily speak and navigate through any environment. He commanded attention and respect. I was hooked."

After high school, Silva joined the active-duty Air Force. He was assigned to Peterson Air Force Base, Colorado, working as a heating, ventilation and air conditioning technician.

"I was on active duty for six years," he said. "I was an average troop, young and dumb for the most part. I wasn't very serious about the job so I didn't have a whole lot of success. I figured I'd do six years and grow a little, go to college and get a job in the civilian sector. I didn't want to drown in debt."

In 2008, Silva left active duty and moved to Florida. He found a job at the Caribe Royal Hotel doing HVAC work.

"Working at the Caribe Royal was fun," he said. "It was a normal service industry job where I did HVAC, so I was comfortable doing what I learned to do in the military. I also witnessed an AFRC Recruiting conference during my time there and thought it looked like a lot of fun."

When he got laid off from the hotel, he went to a local recruiting office and met with a recruiter who put him into the Reserve at Homestead Air Reserve Base in Florida.

Working as a traditional Reservist in civil engineering at Homestead, he started to look for a way to wear the uniform full time again.

"To be honest, I missed the uniform and I felt like recruiting would be a cool job to have since I like to socialize and talk. But I had no idea I would become a recruiter until I met the recruiter at Homestead," he said. "He gave me the initial information. At that point, I was already looking at some options to go back on active duty. He laid down the process and then I went to interview with the chief in Tampa who did my 'recruit the recruiter' package."

The rest is history. In addition to winning the top recruiter award for 2018, Silva has also been a member of the Century Club for six consecutive years. To earn Century Club status,

a recruiter must attain 150 percent of his or her classification goal.

"Early on, I interacted with individuals who invested in my ability to aim high, whether I did or not," he said. "That created a habit, then it evolved to see if I could be better than the year before. I competed with myself a lot. I had no focus other than self-improvement."

While Silva does appreciate the awards and acknowledgement, he feels it is an obligation to continue working at the highest level and set the bar for others.

"The recognition aspect is always a confidence booster," he said. "But Century Club for me is a responsibility. It is a chance to motivate and bring other recruiters up to my level. You can't ask anybody to go to a place where you have not been yourself."

Mungavin is a legend in AFRC Recruiting, having been its commander for eight years and being honored with the Order of the Sword upon his retirement. Silva said it was extra special to receive the Mungavin Award from the man himself.

"It was tremendously humbling to be in the presence of such a historical figure in recruiting," he said. "I was honored to be on that stage and I felt a great sense of obligation to my peers to continue to be a good follower and an effective peer mentor."

Mungavin said being back with the recruiters was a great experience.

"It's always an honor to present the award and fun to be with recruiters," Mungavin said. "On stage I congratulated him and afterwards I found him and told him how proud I was of him and I believed he would make an outstanding leader. I also sent him a congratulations card the next day. I think it's great when you look at his background and all he has had to do to get where he is now. It makes it extra specials."

One of the things that helps AFRC remain on the cutting edge is their recruiting efforts are strengthened by the broad array of backgrounds and experiences of its Reserve Citizen Airmen. This diversity is not only seen with Airmen at the units, but also



Left, Master Sgt. Jose Escorza, an officer accessions recruiter at March Air Reserve Base, California, chats with youngsters at a recent March ARB air and space show. Right, Master Sgt. Geovanny Govea, an instructor at the Recruiting Schoolhouse, teaches a class. Escorza and Govea both have ties to Ecuador. (Master Sgt. Chance Babin)

cuts across the ranks of recruiters in AFRC Recruiting Service.

“In recruiting we seek out and find only the best people to fill vacancies throughout the command. Diversity ensures that we accomplish that mission” said Chief Master Sgt. Jean Vargo, AFRC RS manager. “When we are hiring new recruiters it’s the same thing. We want the best people to do the job. Having recruiters from diverse backgrounds makes us the best recruiting service the military has to offer.”

Silva is not the only AFRC recruiter who hails from Ecuador or has family there. Master Sgt. Geovanny Govea, an instructor at the Recruiting Schoolhouse, has ties to the South American country. His parents migrated to the United States in the 1970s seeking a better future for their kids.

“My dad was sponsored by Caterpillar as a mechanic and I was born here in the U.S., the first citizen in my family,” Govea said. “As a child, we went to Guayaquil, Ecuador, for the summers and it was life changing for me. We boiled water to drink, slept with mosquito nets, had no plumbing or AC and we walked everywhere. It definitely makes you think about the luxuries we take for granted here in the U.S. Going to Ecuador and witnessing life in an underprivileged country humbled me. I could have lived in that environment but my parents wanted something better ... the American dream.”

Govea said he works hard to prove his parents were right in their decision to move to the United States.

“Throughout my life, I have strived to bring merit to my family for migrating to the U.S.,” he said. “I’m so grateful to be an American and an Airman.”

Coincidentally, Silva and Govea's paths crossed while they were on active duty at Peterson.

“(Silva) is a hard worker and a go-getter,” Govea said. “We met on active duty when I was security forces and he was CE. We later went through the recruiting evaluation course and then

tech school when we became recruiters. We work well together.”

Master Sgt. Jose Escorza, an officer accessions recruiter at March ARB, California, is also originally from Ecuador.

“I have known Master Sgt. Silva for about three years,” Escorza said. “I have never worked with him but we bumped into each other during the 2015 deployment for training in Orlando. We started talking about our backgrounds and found out we are both from the same town in Ecuador. In fact, His grandmother lived in my same neighborhood.”

Escorza said Silva was the first person from Ecuador he met in the Air Force.

“This was very exciting for me to see somebody so successful in the recruiting organization who came from my background,” he said. “Master Sgt. Silva also introduced me to Master Sgt. Govea and let me know his family is also from Ecuador. Even though I have never worked with him, I admire his passion for the job and for helping others reach their goals. He simply sets the example for others to follow.”

Silva said he finds great comfort in having fellow recruiters with his similar background and love for the Air Force.

“I come from a small country and to find two more people who share the same ethnic background is highly unlikely,” Silva said. “But to find two great friends who have your same values, work ethic and ethnic background is incredible. I went to recruiting school with Master Sgt. Govea and he has become a longtime friend and mentor. He’s one of the bravest dudes I know. And I met Master Sgt. Escorza because we were in the same squadron. He has been a great friend, always willing to help.”

New Participation Policy Reforms, Empowers

By Tyler Grimes

In February, Lt. Gen. Richard Scobee, chief of the Air Force Reserve and commander of Air Force Reserve Command, issued a new policy memo giving new authority to unit commanders regarding Reserve Citizen Airmen on no-pay, no-points status.

The memorandum, titled “Participation Determination for Members of the Air Force Reserve,” provides the rationale for changing the policy and giving the authority to unit commanders.

“This requirement adversely affects unit readiness as it restricts the commander’s ability in determining whether the limitation would prevent the member from performing his or her primary duties,” the memo reads. “As a result, we are removing this restriction and placing the decision where it belongs ... with the commander.”

The memo states that Reservists currently on duty, mobility or fitness restrictions with an Air Force Form 469 may now participate at their commander's discretion.

Col. John Buterbaugh, AFRC command surgeon, is involved with implementing the new policy and said the policy was designed to improve unit readiness and empower commanders.

“We believe a commander best knows if an Airman should be participating based on the duty restrictions outlined on the Form 469 by the medical profiling officer,” Buterbaugh said.

“Previously, many Reservists found themselves unable to continue training pending medical case processing. Now, the situation has radically changed. Most Reservists will be able to continue training.”

The old policy required approval by Buterbaugh's office, which was time consuming and took unit authority out of the hands of the commanders.

“No longer will they be automatically disqualified from participation when they have a potentially medically disqualifying condition,” he said.

For Tech Sgt. Donald Ramos, 514th Air Mobility Wing NCO in charge of chapel operations at Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, New Jersey, the old policy kept him in limbo for a long time.

"I was placed in a non-participation status because of a medical review for more than a year," Ramos said. "I continuously followed up with the medical

squadron and submitted all the documentation when asked of me. Yet, after a year, my case is still pending and hasn't been fully processed."

Ramos explained that he knew several other Reservists who were waiting even longer than he was to get their final determination.

“This can have detrimental effects on a member’s career when, in reality, it’s not their fault,” he said. “Especially, if their medical condition is from a line of duty or is service connected.”

But with this new policy, Ramos said he's happy and hopeful things are improving for Reservists and commanders.

“Overall, I am very satisfied with the recent changes because it has allowed me and other service members an opportunity to continue serving this great country,” he said. “Waiting on the medical squadron to process our reviews can take years to complete, so it’s great they are giving the authority to local commanders to manage their people.”

Col. Thomas Pemberton, 514th AMW commander, said this new policy falls in line with top-level strategy and unit commander empowerment.

“This new policy supports Gen. (David) Goldfein’s direction that we need to allow our commanders to be commanders,” Pemberton said about the chief of staff of the Air Force. “Pushing decision making to the lowest level to allow our men and women to be the leaders we need, Goldfein has said this is a military imperative.”



‘MINISTRY of PRESENCE’

Reserve chaplain is on the front line with security forces troops

By Giancarlo Casem

Chaplain (Capt.) Richardson Honore has an office at Edwards Air Force Base, California, but you won’t usually find him there. You’re more likely to find him out and about with the members of the active-duty 412th Security Forces Squadron.

As the 412th SFS chaplain, Honore believes in the “ministry of presence” – getting out and spending time with the people he serves rather than having them come to him.

The Reserve Citizen Airman’s voice can be heard throughout the hallways of the 412th SFS headquarters building. It is loud and commanding, but it doesn’t instill a feeling of uneasiness or dread. Rather, it invokes a lot of smiles. When Airmen hear his laugh, they know the chaplain is in.

Honore believes being visible out at the gates or at training events with security forces Airmen helps create a more resilient Air Force.

“When you come to them and become a part of them, you’re no longer speaking from the outside. You’re on the inside,” he said. “When they’re training, I’m training with them. I’m visible. I’m there and I’m bringing stuff out to them.”

Honore, along with the other squadron chaplain, Chaplain (1st Lt.) Ferman “Jay” Clark, make it a point to visit their Airmen wherever they may be working or training. During the week, Honore and Clark can be seen visiting defenders at the

base gates or working out with them doing physical fitness training. Often, they’ll bring their hot dog cart with them when they visit the security forces troops.

“I can throw down!” Honore proudly proclaimed. Clark would argue otherwise. Their banter over how to best cook hot dogs shows the Airmen a level of personality and camaraderie they may not be accustomed to.

“I go to all three different gates, dropping off food and providing support so they see me there, they see me with them,” Honore said. “When I’m there I can make observations, affect change and redirect how they approach certain situations, at least from the perspective of dealing with relationships and people.”

Honore believes there is a need for security forces to have an in-house chaplain because of the nature of their duty, which is inherently high stress. He also believes a defender’s home or personal life can affect his or her performance in the line of duty.

From a business management standpoint, a decrease in quality of work due to personal reasons can be costly, both in monetary value and in time.

“My philosophy is if you can take care of the whole person, then the mission can be accomplished,” he said. “If you do not take care of the total person, then it’s very expensive. It costs



Honore gets tased by 412th Security Forces Squadron personnel as part of a capabilities demonstration. Honore serves as the 412th SFS chaplain and volunteered to be tased in order to get a better understanding of different stress factors that defenders face every day.

money and it costs time. I can translate what we do here into money, into time, into man hours. If there’s something going on with a defender and something happens with his family which causes a lot of stress – and it is not dealt with or addressed – then he can’t give you 100 percent.

“Now, if you’re talking about 50 defenders going through things, that’s a lot of deficiencies. That’s a lot of time to make up for. If we can take care of that problem, then the mission just flourishes.”

Honore’s path to chaplaincy started at a city college in New York where he was working toward a mechanical engineering degree. He said he always felt a calling that followed him through a university stint in Alabama. He graduated with degrees in math, computer science and theology.

He then commissioned in the Air Force Reserve as a chaplain and now is on active-duty orders at Edwards.

“I had to answer to a higher power,” Honore said. “It’s a passion, it’s a calling.”

The chaplain uses lessons he learned during his youth in New York when he’s talking to his Airmen.

“I absolutely love being the chaplain of the defenders,” he said. “I love their intensity. I love the drama. I grew up in kind of a tough neighborhood, so this is like home to me.

“I don’t sound like a chaplain when I talk to them. If you hear me without seeing me, you probably wouldn’t know I’m a chaplain. You would know I’m a chaplain by the content (of what I say), but not by the delivery.”

His form of personal outreach and connection endears Honore

to his Airmen. He said his personable approach lets him talk to the Airmen on an individual level. It gives his Airmen a viable person to talk to, which builds their resiliency.

“People just want to see you be real. People want to know you are real. I tell them I got my own issues. I got my own drama I got to go through. But you know what? I’ve learned how to get through it, and maybe I can help you get through yours. You’re not the only person who has problems. You’re not alone,” he said.

Security forces Airmen and chaplains might not seem like the world’s most practical partnership, but Honore and Clark both believe they have had a positive and profound impact on the lives of security forces Airmen. They offer an opportunity for Airmen to de-stress and relax during their busy day providing base security.

“I can, with certainty, say a number of the security forces Airmen have expressed a healthy measure of gratitude for the time and effort that has been offered to them, especially by Chaplain Honore,” Clark said. “It is a neat experience to see him walk down the hallways and people light up and look forward to having a conversation with him.”

With a big, genuine smile, Honore greets every Airman he sees walking down the hallway of the SFS headquarters. His infectious laugh carries throughout the building. To Honore, a smile and a simple “what’s up, chap?” means he is accomplishing his mission. Flame-broiled hot dogs, topped with chili and cheese, also help.

(Casem is assigned to the 412th Test Wing public affairs office.)



Chaplain (Capt.) Richardson Honore grills hotdogs for 412th Security Forces Squadron Airmen at Edwards Air Force Base, California.

Thrust You Can Trust



Airman 1st Class Jacob Carpenter, 355th Component Maintenance Squadron engine mechanic, left, and Staff Sgt. Kenneth Tower, 924th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron engine mechanic, install compressor cases on a TF-34 engine at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona. Active duty Airmen from the 355th CMS and Reserve Airmen from the 924th AMXS work alongside one another in order to complete workloads.

Total Force propulsion shop shines at Davis-Monthan

Story by Chief Master Sgt. Henry S. May
Photos by Airman Frankie D. Moore

A Total Force partnership is producing record breaking results inside the Jet Engine Intermediate Maintenance shop at Davis Monthan Air Force Base, Arizona.

The JEIM is responsible for supplying fully mission capable TF-34 jet engines for the A-10C Thunderbolt II fleet of aircraft. To meet this demanding requirement, Reserve Citizen Airmen from the 924th Maintenance Squadron combine manpower and experience with their active-duty counterparts in the 355th Component Maintenance Squadron as part of the Total Force enterprise.

One of the JEIM's main goals is to ensure a minimum of five spare TF-34 engines are available at a moment's notice. Recently, the shop had 16 fully mission-capable spares ready to go – a record for Davis-Monthan and the A-10C propulsion community at large.



Salvador Nuñez, 924th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron engine mechanic, tightens bolts on a TF-34 engine.

“This feat is unprecedented in the A-10 engine maintenance community,” said Chief Master Sgt. Johnnie Gilbert, an air reserve technician who serves as the superintendent for the 924th MXS. “Put simply, this is a shining example of what can be accomplished when the Total Force enterprise is executed well.”

Reaching this milestone was not without significant challenges. The Airmen of the JEIM at Davis Monthan faced part shortages of key engine rebuild components for the past 12 months, affecting engine maintenance repair times.

Despite the part shortages, manpower challenges and a high operations tempo, the Airmen of the 924th MXS and the 355th CMS were not deterred in their efforts. Their technical competence, ingenuity and warfighter mentality drove efforts to provide unsurpassed engine maintenance production.

“In addition to reaching the spare engine milestone, we have doubled the unit's TF-34 engine production in just a few years,” said Master Sgt. David Hart, 924th MXS JEIM section chief. “In fiscal 2016, the JEIM produced 40 engines. By the end of fiscal 2018, we had produced 86 engines. That was a major factor in setting this new record for spares.”

The JEIM team at Davis Monthan continues to look for ways to further increase engine production to meet – and exceed – operational requirements.

“There is no limit to what active-duty and Reserve Airmen can accomplish when working together,” Gilbert said.

(May is assigned to the 924th Maintenance Squadron.)

Benjamin Edwards, 355th CMS engine mechanic, works on a TF-34 engine.



Take Ownership of Your Career Progression

(Editor's note: In an effort to ensure Reserve Citizen Airmen stay up-to-date on personnel information important to them, Citizen Airman will run regular features from the Air Reserve Personnel Center in the magazine. Look for the ARPC header (above) to identify important personnel news.)

Headquarters Air Reserve Personnel Center strives to provide Reserve Citizen Airmen exceptional personnel services and products. From initial entry to retirement, the center supports generations of Airmen throughout their military careers and beyond.

Now more than ever, Airmen must be knowledgeable about maintaining their personnel records and take ownership of their career progression. Realizing the importance of an up-to-date and accurate points credit summary and how to request corrective actions to personnel records, for example, are crucial for Airmen at all stages of their careers to understand.

Over the coming weeks and months, the public affairs staff will be updating the HQ ARPC website and social media platforms to include relevant and useful articles, infographics and videos. All of these products will provide Airmen the tools needed to educate themselves and effectively manage their personnel actions.

HQ ARPC also offers training opportunities for Reservists through the Air Reserve Component Field Training and the Spread the Word programs.

ARC Field Training is a two-day course held at Buckley AFB, Colorado, for force support squadron and commander support staff personnel. During the course, participants receive instruction from all directorates within ARPC, providing a complete understanding of the services offered to the Reserve community.

The Spread the Word program allows wing commanders to host in-house training sessions led by subject matter experts from ARPC. Topics discussed during these events include, but are not limited to, education and post 9/11 GI Bill benefits, promotions and career development, understanding points summaries and topics relevant to members nearing retirement.

Information on the next ARC field training course can be found on the ARPC website under the “Links of Interest” tab. Commanders interested in hosting a Spread the Word event may send their request to arpc.presentations1@us.af.mil or contact the HQ ARPC director of staff office at 720-847-3022.

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